



Professor Dr. Claudia Schnurmann

Hamburg-America Lines



**Contacts of Commerce and Knowledge
between
Hamburg and the U.S.A., 1768–1927**



Imprint

Publisher:

U.S. Consulate General Hamburg
Public Affairs
Alsterufer 27/28
20354 Hamburg, Germany

Editor: Dr. Heiko Herold

Proofreader: Elizabeth Blythe Brach

Copyright 2019 U.S. Consulate General Hamburg

Photo credits:

Title page (left): Extract of the Hamburg Senate's protocol: On July 10, 1793, John Parish conveyed the patent of President George Washington to the Senate that appointed him as U.S. Consul to Hamburg. Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 111-1 / CLVII Lit. Jb Nr. 20 Vol 18.

Title page (right): First Convention of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the United States and the Hanseatic cities of Luebeck, Bremen and Hamburg from December 20, 1827. Stiftung Hanseatisches Wirtschaftsarchiv, Sammlung Commerzbibliothek, S/749.

Page 17: Dr. Heiko Herold, U.S. Department of State

Graphics, Production and Printing:

Media Support Office, U.S. Embassy Berlin

Table of Contents

David Scott Zeller
Preface 2

U.S. Consul General Richard Tsutomo Yoneoka
Welcoming Address on the Occasion of Professor Dr. Schnurmann’s
Presentation at U.S. Consulate General Hamburg on April 25, 2018 3

Professor Dr. Claudia Schnurmann
Hamburg-America Lines: Contacts of Commerce and Knowledge
between Hamburg and the U.S.A., 1768-1927..... 5

David Scott Zeller

President of The American Club of Hamburg e. V.

Preface

It was a great pleasure to invite Professor Dr. Claudia Schnurmann on April 25, 2018 to the U.S. Consulate General, where she addressed the members of The American Club of Hamburg. Early on, she outlined how The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg and its folk played an important role in the founding of the United States of America, testimonial to George Washington's subsequent diplomatic appointment of a Vice-Consul to the Hanseatic City in 1790.

Professor Schurmann recounted the captivating details of soon-to-be Consul John Parish and his cat-and-mouse game with the British Consul Mathias, who was busy organizing Hessian mercenaries to fight alongside the British in the Revolutionary War. Parish and other merchants were cleverly supported by Count von Schimmelmann to supply Washington's Continental Army with much needed arms and munitions via the Danish colony of St. Thomas. Without these important contributions organized in Hamburg, the Revolutionary War might have had a different outcome.

Consul Parish's son, David Parish, also played an important role in securing finances for the American government during the War of 1812. He contributed his own money and involved American bankers such as Stephen Girard and German tycoon Johann Jakob Astor. And, helping to establish Hamburg as the gateway to the world, the enlightened Pfeffersäcke, such as Edmund Siemens, referred to as Hamburg's Carnegie, creating their own Hamburg-America lines of trading.

Professor Schurmann is recipient of the OAH (Organization of American Historians) Prize for the world's best non-English speaking study of North American history. Her expertise is well employed in weaving a fascinating account of a century and half of commerce between Hamburg and the USA. Anyone who has spent time in Hamburg will recognize many people mentioned in her speech, who have been immortalized as street names, such as Sieveking and Caspar Voght. Other household names woven into her accounts include: Berenberg, Oppenheimer, Haller, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay and the Marquis de Lafayette.

This concise discourse provides an excellent overview of the enthralling bond between Hamburg and the USA, as articulated by the Chair of North American, Atlantic and Caribbean Modern History at the University of Hamburg, Professor Claudia Schurmann.

Happy readings!

U.S. Consul General Richard Tsutomo Yoneoka

**Welcoming Address on the Occasion of Professor Dr. Schnurmann's
Presentation at U.S. Consulate General Hamburg on April 25, 2018**

Dear David,
Dear Professor Dr. Schnurmann,
Dear Mr. Boué,
Dear members of the American Club Hamburg,
Dear guests,

**Welcome to the oldest diplomatic representation of the
United States of America in Germany!**

When I took the office of the Consul General in July 2016, I was aware of the historical terrain I would be on for the next three years. The United States established the Consulate in 1790; one year after the Constitution had come into effect. Since then sixty Consuls and Consul Generals have proudly represented the United States and have supported the political, economic and cultural relationship between Hamburg and Northern Germany.

Just a few days ago I visited the new Hotel Fontenay – a beautiful building which John Fontenay, after whom it was named, surely would have liked. Many of you might not know that John Fontenay was an American citizen. He was born, presumably, at the turn of the year 1769/1770 in Pennsylvania or Massachusetts – despite intensive historical research place and date of birth have not been identified. He emigrated to Hamburg in 1797, where he became a very successful ship broker. In 1801 he received Hamburg citizenship and a few months later he married a wealthy widow, Anna Catharina Kirsten. During the Napoleonic occupation he left Hamburg for a couple of years. After his return he acquired lots of land on the banks of the the Alster, in the Dammtor area and along today's roads Mittelweg and Alsterufer. In 1831 Fontenay declared the area as an entailed estate for his descendants in his testament. The estate has been owned by the family until today and is administered by the John-Fontenays-Testament-Foundation, which is located close to the Consulate at Alsterufer 34.

Welcoming Address on the Occasion of Professor Dr. Schnurmann's Presentation at U.S. Consulate General Hamburg on April 25, 2018

John Fontenay is just one example of the rich historical relations between Hamburg and the United States of America. Tonight we want to reflect and honor the history of this relationship since the founding of our nation. Professor Dr. Claudia Schnurmann is a renowned expert on this topic, and I am very glad that the American Club was able to win her for this presentation. Maybe you do not know it, but Dr. Schnurmann is the only professor in my consular district – in whole northern Germany – who has a Chair for North American History.

Professor Schnurmann has given talks at our Consulate several times. Her talk about the first consul John Parish in early 2009 is unforgettable. Back then Peter Boué donated a portrait of his ancestor to the Consulate that has been greeting every visitor in our representative area for nine years. I also would also like to mention the historical conference at the Consulate six years ago, on the occasion of the 222nd anniversary of its establishment, to which Professor Schnurmann contributed significantly.

Professor Schnurmann, I'm looking forward to your lecture! The floor is yours.

Thank you.

Hamburg-America Lines: Contacts of Commerce and Knowledge between Hamburg and the U.S.A., 1768-1927

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen!

Mr. Consul General: it is a pleasure to return to the Little White House on the Alster! The originally two villas were designed in the 1880's by Hamburg's leading 19th century architect Martin Haller¹, a man with close family ties to the U.S.A. However, I do not want to elaborate on this special version of a Hamburg-America line. I would get carried away by my hobby horse...²

Thank you to Mr. Yoneoka, the American Club of Hamburg and its President David Scott Zeller for this great opportunity. The importance of Hamburg-America lines of commerce and knowledge from a mutual past³ to our present time and towards a common bright future are vital.

The fruitful Hamburg-America lines both in commercial as well as in cultural forms started long before the famous one and only Hamburg-America line, the *HAPAG*, that was established in 1847. From its early start in the 17th and 18th century, a vivid interaction for the wellbeing between colonial British North America and two republics, the big U.S.A. and the tiny Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, manifested. Even in those times people were clever, smart and knew that knowledge was power. Expertise was the key to success. Merchants and scholars, politicians and teachers knew that mercantile success and fruitful mercantile deals within, and in favor of, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg were enabled by thorough knowledge of their partner

1 Heiko Herold: *Kleine Geschichte des US-Generalkonsulats Hamburg / A Little History of the U.S. Consulate General Hamburg*, Hamburg 2019, p. 9.

2 For the American connection of Martin Haller who was related to Francis Lieber (1798-1872), a leading 19th century Atlantic broker, and his Hamburg born wife Mathilde, born Oppenheimer (1805-1890), a cousin of Martin Haller's parents, see: Claudia Schnurmann, *Brücken aus Papier: Atlantischer Wissenstransfer in dem Briefnetzwerk des deutsch-amerikanischen Ehepaars Francis und Mathilde Lieber, 1827-1872* (= ACS vol. 11), Münster 2014; Claudia Schnurmann, *A Sea of Love: The Atlantic Correspondence of Francis and Mathilde Lieber, 1839-1845*, Leiden et al. 2018 (= Brill's Specials in Modern History, vol. 3).

3 For Hamburg's position in the Atlantic trade see: Markus A. Denzel, *Hamburg als Zentrum des mitteleuropäischen Handels mit Übersee vom späten 17. bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Annales Mercaturae* 2, 2016, pp. 77-108.

from across the “Big Pond”. Merchants in those times, especially in the last decades of the 18th century — a kind of formative period of economic expertise, interest in commercial statistics, and book keeping — hardly went to university and studied economics. Future merchants and entrepreneurs from well to do families in Hamburg and Danish Altona visited the Johanneum or the Christianeum, just like their friends did who were destined to become lawyers, physicians, or pastors after graduating at venerable universities. However, the students of Mercury got first class training and learned their economic skills at the *Handelsakademie* or Commercial Academy, the so-called *Hamburger Institut zur Erziehung und Vorübung des jungen Kaufmanns*. This useful enterprise was founded in 1768 by the Hamburg merchant Friedrich Christian Wurmb.⁴ The curriculum aimed at the creation of the *gelehrte Kaufmann*, the sophisticated merchant, the enlightened 18th century version of the commerce minded virtuous citizen that was a far cry since Luther’s time of a much disgraced, greedy, and uneducated peddler. Future celebrities of the scholarly world like Alexander von Humboldt and Barthold Georg Niebuhr were industrious students of the Commercial Academy under the tutoring of Johann Georg Büsch (1728-1800) who soon became partner of Wurmb in directing the private school.⁵ In their endeavors to teach many valuable skills to promising young offspring of well to do merchants from Hamburg and northern Germany, the two men were joined in 1769 by the multitalented teacher Christoph Daniel Ebeling (1741-1817)⁶ Who was taught by Göttingen history professor Gottfried Achenwall (1719-1772) in contemporary American history.⁷ Both Büsch and Ebeling were well connected with friends and colleagues in British North America/U.S.A. and created a new discipline *avant la lettre*, today known as American studies. They did it by publishing extensively on American history, politics, commerce, and culture. They trained their students with practical instructions on how to behave in an American environment. From 1793 through 1816 Ebeling published seven volumes of *Erdbeschreibung und Geschichte von Amerika. Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, which were printed in Hamburg. He translated reports by Andrew Burnaby on travelling across North America, which Bohn publishers printed in Hamburg in the annus venerabilis 1776.⁸

4 Hans-Otto Schenk, *Marktwirtschaftslehre des Handels*, Wiesbaden 1991, p. 117.

5 Johannes Classen, *Die ehemalige Handelsakademie des Professors J. G. Büsch und die Zukunft des akademischen Gymnasiums in Hamburg*, Hamburg 1865.

6 Michael Bergeest, *Bildung zwischen Commerz und Emanzipation: Erwachsenenbildung in der Hamburger Region des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, Münster and New York 1995; H.-Hugo Kremer, Tade Tramm, Karl Wilbers (eds.), *Kaufmännische Bildung? Sondierungen zu einer vernachlässigten Sinn-dimension (= Texte zur Wirtschaftspädagogik und Personalentwicklung, vol. 10)*, Berlin 2014.

7 Gottfried Achenwall, *Einige Anmerkungen über Nordamerika, und über dasige Grosbritannische Colonien: Aus mündlichen Nachrichten des Hrn Dr Franklins*, in: *Hannoversches Magazin*, 17tes, 18tes, 19tes, 31tes, 32tes Stück, 1767, pp. 257-296, 482-508, URL: <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-13-02-0124> (10/08/2019).

8 Andreas Burnaby, *Reisen durch die Mittlern Kolonien der Engländer in Nord-Amerika, nebst Anmerkungen über den Zustand der Kolonien, aus dem Englischen übersetzt, mit Anmerkungen und Zusätzen von Christoph Daniel Ebeling*, Hamburg and Kiel 1776; original title: Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the middle settlements in North-America*, London 1775.

In close cooperation with Büsch, Ebeling published three volumes of the *Handlungsbibliothek*, Hamburg 1784-1797. These were followed by *Amerikanisches Magazin, oder authentische Beiträge zur Erdbeschreibung, Staatskunde und Geschichte von Amerika, besonders aber der Vereinigten Staaten*, Hamburg 1795-1797, in cooperation with Dietrich Hermann Hegewisch (1740-1812).⁹ Hegewisch had certainly developed his own understanding of American realities when he had been the tutor of a young Ernst Heinrich von Schimmelmänn (1747-1831), future minister to the Danish King. His student was the son of Heinrich Carl von Schimmelmänn (1724-1782) who had acquired his exceeding riches by slave trade and as owner of sugarcane plantations in the Danish West Indies based on forced labour. In 1789 Ebeling, Büsch and Peter Heinrich Christoph Brodhagen created a kind of “DIY” how-to-manual to establish a successful career as a merchant and to promote Hamburg’s image as a center of world trade when they published *Gottfried Christian Bohns wohlverfahrener Kaufmann*. They dedicated their opus to Hamburg’s mayor Martin Dorner and Senator Cornelius Wilhelm Poppe. This was a clever move to advertise their own flourishing Commercial Academy as well as paying tribute to Hamburg’s qualities as a first rate entrepôt for European and American trade. All those publications were read by merchants and merchants-to-be, who were interested in mercantile activities in North America as well as by scholars like Matthias Christian Sprengel (1746-1803) who was eagerly looking for new fields of academic labor, first in Göttingen, then in Halle. Already in the 1770’s the Göttingen history professor had blended politics, statistical approaches, history, geography, and economy in his extensive studies to a mélange that was interesting for academia and responded to the practical needs of merchants.¹⁰ All these pioneers in the field of American studies took necessary research materials from maps, newspapers, recently published books and letters from their well-informed friends, colleagues, correspondents, merchants and scholars alike in the U.S.A., scholars like Israel Thorndike or William Bentley.¹¹ Most of those people knew the topics involved from first hand experiences. While Büsch, Ebeling or the outspoken abolitionist Sprengel treated their objects as armchair travelers, who never left the safety of Hamburg’s city walls or the academic ivory tower in Lower Saxony or Saxony-Anhalt. Their students, however, intensified their knowledge by mobility—both intellectually and practically.

9 Jürgen Overhoff, Christoph Daniel Ebeling (1741-1817): Forschungsbericht zu einem weit über Hamburg hinaus bedeutsamen Aufklärer, Amerikanisten, Pädagogen, Publizisten, Musikkritiker und Bibliothekar, in: *Mitteilungen des Hamburger Arbeitskreises für Regionalgeschichte* 43, 2004, pp. 69-82.

10 Matthias Christian Sprengel, *Briefe den gegenwertigen Zustand von Nordamerika betreffend*, Göttingen 1777; Id., *Geschichte der Revolution in Nordamerika*, Frankenthal 1783; Id., *Über den jetzigen Nordamerikanischen Krieg*, Leipzig 1782.

11 See Christophe Daniel Ebeling letters to William Bentley, 1795-1817, Houghton Library, Harvard Library, Harvard University, Cambridge/MA, URL: <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/3350> (10/08/2019).

Like noblemen have done since the 16th and 17th century, young Hamburg merchants have gone on a Grand Tour across the world since the late 18th century. Besides paying tribute to cultural achievements like museums, monuments, celebrities, and nature's beauties, like their noble peers, these young adventurous men travelled roads, rivers, and seas to acquire first hand expertise of local trading usances, mercantile demands, and possibilities.¹² Nearly all the Hamburg merchants went to places, port towns, or production regions they wanted to trade within their later professional life. They learned all the necessary languages right on the spot by immersing into foreign societies. They learned national styles of exquisite handwriting for professional correspondence and to know the history of their partners' land to make the correct decisions in their commercial present.

Knowing historical constellation and trying to stay up to date on recent developments, being alerted to the state of commercial art, staying in close correspondence with friends and partners across the big pond was vital for business success and long-term decisions. Travelling, meeting in person, networking were crucial now and then — meeting in clubs, smoking, drinking, singing together, socializing, and wom-anizing. Human bonding was as helpful as knowledge of goods, exchange rates and stock markets. Merchants obviously learned their lessons, and this had an impact on their commercial dealings. Economy and politics went hand in hand. Decisions were made on the banks of the Elbe river as well as on the banks of the Delaware, Potomac, Hudson or Charles River/MA that were important for both the city-state of Hamburg and the young republic. They differed in size, but were equal in political self-perception.

You want examples? You can have examples!

The basis of Hamburg-America lines was formed by private contacts: There were unofficial relationships that proved to be lifesaving for the problematic situation during the formative period of the U.S.A., between the two American wars of independence, 1775-1783 and 1812-1814. The first rescuer of the much-troubled U.S.A. turned out to be John Parish whose name is of special importance to the institution where we are right now, the U.S. Consulate General in Hamburg.

John Parish was born in 1742 in Scotland. As a young boy he moved with his parents to Hamburg. He lived in the Hanseatic city from the 1750's until 1806 when he escaped from the French occupation of Hamburg, first to Copenhagen/Denmark, then to his glamorous

12 See Sophus A. Reinert, Mapping the Economic Grand Tour: Travel and International Emulation in Enlightenment Europe, working paper 17-005, Harvard Business School 2016, URL: https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/17-005_19bb13c9-2a75-4eaf-957b-4ffa1da84e2f.pdf (10/08/2019). This paper includes important references to recent studies.

exile in posh Bath/England. The headstrong Scotsman came to the rescue of the young, much troubled U.S.-American republic; he befriended Robert Morris (1734-1806) of Philadelphia, a banker, and the broker of George Washington and his badly equipped Continental Army. Morris knew that Parish was sympathetic to the needs of colonists determined to defend themselves against British encroachments—something that the Scotsman Parish knew only too well whose father had been mobbed by English merchants in Hamburg. The Second Continental Congress (May 5, 1775 through March 2, 1789) eventually appointed John Parish as the principal agent for the United States in Hamburg.

John Parish and his fellow merchants in Hamburg played a cat and mouse game with the British consul Emanuel Mathias due to British pressure aimed at European merchants doing business with the colonists:

"Last night there arrived another American vessel, called the Patty," a frustrated Mathias wrote to his master in London in early September 1776, "but before she came, I hear, so far as to reach the pales of this port, Mr. Parish and Messrs Klefecker and Paschen [...] having previous advice of her sailing up, hurried with the utmost expedition a dozen of people down to meet her, who [...] made it their business to tow her back to Altona, where she now lies, a proof that a trade and correspondence is carrying on by the said merchants, in opposition to His Majesty proclamation, prohibiting his loyal subjects and others from having any connection, or carrying on any trade and correspondence with the rebels in America."¹³

John Parish demonstrated not only speed and agility in handling American imports to the Danish port of Altona, just down the Elbe River from Hamburg, he also energetically procured military hardware the Americans desperately needed. Early in the War for Independence, the British Consul Mathias was busy organizing transportation for German troops from Brunswick and Hanover (the so-called *Hessian* mercenaries) to North America to serve as reinforcements for the British Army, while the Danish-North German Count Heinrich Carl von Schimmelmann purchased and assembled large amounts of military goods for the American rebels in British King George III's Electorate of Hanover. Schimmelmann's agents bought saddles, gunpowder pouches, guns, ammunition, and textiles for George Washington's Continental army and delivered them via the Danish Caribbean island of St. Thomas. Soon a number of Hamburg merchants began to imitate Schimmelmann's much-envied and highly-profitable, yet risky, mercantile activities. Among these imitators were the companies of Paschen & Klefecker, Georg Sieveking & Caspar Voght, and John Parish.¹⁴

13 Claudia Schnurmann, A Scotsman in Hamburg: John Parish and his Commercial Contribution to the American War of Independence, 1776–1783, in: Markus A. Denzel, Jan de Vries and Philipp Robinson Rössner (eds.), *Small is Beautiful? Interlopers and smaller trading nations in the pre-industrial Period* (= VSWG Beihefte 213), Stuttgart 2011, pp. 157–176, esp. p. 166: The National Archive (TNA) SP 82/95 1776 No. 44, Emanuel Mathias to Lord Suffolk, Hamburg.

14 Schnurmann, A Scotsman in Hamburg, passim.

Parish travelled into Prussian territories in search of textiles for tents, uniforms, and blankets for Washington's soldiers. The linen he exported was likely to have been acquired from the heirs of Abraham Dürninger (1706-1773), where his company was entrusted by the Renewed Moravian Church with the distribution of their textiles in Europe. Perhaps it was this linen George Washington's marquee—now the center piece in the brand-new Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia—was made of. The irony, of course, was that the Moravian Church in North America—brothers in faith of Dürninger—had adopted pacifist principles and declared themselves neutral in the conflict between Great Britain and her colonies. Parish also traveled through the northern German lands and offered as much as £30,000 and £40,000 Sterling, according to British Consul Emanuel Mathias, for arms and gunpowder. These military purchases were partly financed by the proceeds of colonial goods transported in Robert Morris's ships.

Both influential and less prominent politicians on the U.S.-American side participated in this Hamburg-American exchange: Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Gouverneur Morris were as much involved as the little-known John Ross (1726-1800) who, in the decade before the Declaration of Independence, had come to North America. Serving the best of their own interests as well as the common cause, these politicians worked hard to meet the needs of the Continental Army. In this process John Parish and John Ross made life difficult for British Consul Mathias in Hamburg. Ross, like Parish, was a native Scotsman, where he hailed from Tain, County Ross. In Philadelphia, Ross had established himself as a successful merchant who joined the “rebellious side” early in the evolving controversy between the American mainland colonies and Great Britain. John Ross was related to two of Parish's closest associates, Dr. Collin Ross, who practiced medicine in Hamburg, and Parish's later son-in-law, Hercules Ross (1745-1816), a Scottish merchant and exporter of military goods, who had acquired considerable riches as owner of a Jamaican sugarcane plantation.

In May 1776, a sub-committee of the Continental Congress appointed John Ross as principal agent for European military shipments for the Continental Army. As a committed “rebel” and friend of the Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834), Ross invested heavily in the American independence cause. On behalf of the secret committee of the Continental Congress, he travelled to Amsterdam, Nantes, and Paris for negotiations with financiers and suppliers of military goods. In autumn of 1776, Ross arrived to Hamburg as an extended guest to John Parish. Mathias tried hard to hinder the close cooperation between Parish and Ross. On one occasion, Mathias succeeded in having the vessels *Jamaica Packet* and *Clementine*, which were owned by Parish and Ross, confiscated. The charges were based on depositions by bribed crewmembers from both vessels. Contradictory depositions by the captains of the ships, coupled with a barrage of declarations and denials of the charges of fraud, smuggling, and infringement of

the British Acts of Trade and Navigation, not only discredited the crewmembers' depositions but caused such a stir that the Hamburg Senate decreed the release of the ships. They hurriedly left Hamburg en route to North America.

John Parish invested a portion of the large profits from his trade with the rebellious British colonies and later the United States with real estate in Hamburg and the surrounding region. In 1779, he purchased a palatial estate in nearby Nienstedten, which was then under Danish rule. By 1798, he had invested 75,000 Mark Banco (the currency of Hamburg) to renovate and improve the property. These investments testify to his eagerness to provide an ostentatious public residence for his large and growing family. As a host, John Parish was known for his exquisite splendor. He pampered not only his partner John Ross, but his many guests from the U.S.A. like Gouverneur Morris and John Adams or, later, an international celebrity like the Marquis Lafayette who was released from Olmütz prison with opulent dinners and exquisite wines.

John Parish owed his excellent reputation in the United States to his decidedly anti-British trading practices in the early 1770's and 1780's. His personal Hamburg-America lines personified in friendships and partnerships in Hamburg and Philadelphia, like Stephen Girard or Caspar Voght. For those deeds he finally was rewarded with the appointment as the first U.S.-American vice-consul to Hamburg in June 1790, an honor he, however, declined in a letter to Thomas Jefferson in December of the same year.¹⁵ Finally, in August 1794 after the post had been upgraded Parish accepted Washington's decision from February 1793 to appoint him as the first U.S.-American consul to Hamburg.¹⁶ Parish served only three years in this position when he was dismissed after France had complained about his conduct to the U.S. government.

This Hamburg-America line corresponded with close diplomatic relations: the Hamburg Senate had been one of the very first European political institutions that congratulated the U.S.A. on their independence from Great Britain in 1783, while arranging a treaty of commerce with the promising U.S.-American Congress after the Articles of

15 See Journal of the executive proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America, Thursday, June 17, 1790, p. 52: „Of John Parish, merchant, of Hamburg, to be Vice-Consul of the United States of America for Hamburg.“ URL: http://memory.loc.gov/l1/llej/001/llej001.sgm_old (10/08/2019); John Parish, Hamburg, to Thomas Jefferson, 21. December 1790, see Founders Online, National Archives, URL <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/jefferson/01-18-02-0122> (10/08/2019).

16 See Journal of the executive proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America, Wednesday, February 20, 1793, p. 131: „John Parish, native of Great Britain, to be Consul of the United States of America, for the port of Hamburg“. John Parish, Hamburg, to George Washington, 20. August 1794, Founders Online, National Archives, URL: <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-16-02-0403> (10/08/2019).

Confederation had been passed.¹⁷ They described the mercantile possibilities of Hamburg in the brightest of colors and put special emphasis on the excellent geo-strategical position of Hamburg on the Elbe River between two oceans, the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. This plan for a treaty at that early point would come to nothing, although Büsch published a pamphlet commending it.¹⁸ The details of the treaty showed Hamburg's profound interest in commercial connections with the U.S.A. The proposal was strongly supported by old hands in the Hamburg-America network, hands like Georg Heinrich Sieveking and his partner Caspar Voght (1752-1839), a rich Hamburg merchant, reformer, and owner of a plantation in Virginia. Voght maintained a special stake in the American market; his estates in Hamburg's west end (list of Hamburg Cultural Monuments, no. 17042) imitated the style of Mount Vernon, Virginia, the famous manor of his friend George Washington who would become the first U.S.-American president in 1789. Voght convinced his good friends in Hamburg's Senate to entrust his employee Johann Abraham de Boor (1732-1799) as an agent of Hamburg's diplomatic dealings.¹⁹

The second member of the Parish family who would come to save the U.S.A. was John Parish's favorite son David Parish (1778-1826).²⁰ Born in Hamburg, he came to the U.S.A. in 1806. His main concern was private profit acquired through commerce and investments. David Parish imitated his father's way of doing business, used his father's business contacts,²¹ and pursued his own economic interests with the passion and fortune inherited from his father. During the first phase of his American business career from 1806 through 1808—in addition to his silver transfer deals with the Baring Brothers, the Rothschild Brothers, and the Hope & Co. from Mexico to

17 Annelise Tecke, *Die Glückwunschnachrichte des Hamburger Senats an den Kongress der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika zur erworbenen Unabhängigkeit – 1783*, in: ZVHG 55, pp. 181-183; see letter from the City of Hamburg to Congress, March 29, 1783, in: *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence: A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation. U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875*, URL: <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/> (10/08/2019).

18 Büsch, *Betrachtungen*. See Sam Mustafa, *Merchants and Migrations: Germans and Americans in Connection, 1776-1835*, Aldershot 2001.

19 Johann Abraham de Boor (1732-1799), in: Ulrich A. de Boor, *Familien-Nachrichten über die Familie de Boor, 1650-1900: Leben und Wirken einer Bürgerfamilie aus drei Jahrhunderten*, URL: <https://www.deboor.de> (10/08/2019).

20 Claudia Schnurmann, *His father's favored son: David Parish (1778-1826)*, in: *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies 1720 to the Present*, ed. by the German Historical Institute in Washington/DC, URL: <https://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org> (10/08/2019).

21 See the letter of recommendation in favor of David Parish from Marquis Lafayette to Thomas Jefferson, Paris June 20, 1804, in: James P. McClure (ed.), *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 43, 11 March to 30 June 1804, Princeton/NJ 2017, p. 622.

France²²—his firm entered the Atlantic linen trade in cooperation with another close business partner of his father, the Hamburg company of Matthiessen & Sillem. He exported linen from Silesia via Hamburg to New Orleans. In return he shipped tea from Canton in southern China via the United States to Hamburg. Putting his recently acquired expertise in the U.S. to good use, he helped his brothers Richard, John, and Charles Parish to secure trading advantages in Hamburg's declining Atlantic trade during the continental blockade of 1807 to 1814. Parish convinced his business partners in Baltimore, New York, and Philadelphia to convey goods to his brothers in Hamburg and to use their brokerage services in order to aid them in their efforts to make business deals in Hamburg, Heligoland (Helgoland), Tönning, and London.²³

The second phase of David Parish's American business career from 1808 to 1816 was initiated and shaped by advice that Parish received from Gouverneur Morris, the owner of large estates in New York, a financier and *rentier* (landlord). David Parish followed the examples of his brother-in-law, Hercules Ross, in Montrose, Scotland, and fellow merchants in Hamburg and began to invest excess capital from his trade in land purchases. Like his colleagues from Hamburg, living in the German lands, Venezuela, and the West Indies, the young Hamburg merchant began to adopt a lord of the manor lifestyle.

In 1808, Parish began to acquire land from Gouverneur Morris, in St. Lawrence and Jefferson County in Upstate New York. By 1816, he had amassed some 127,415 acres for which he paid \$375,000 (approximately \$6.7 million in 2018). He energetically began to develop and implement plans for settling and exploiting his newly acquired assets. He personally supervised the construction of roads to improve the infrastructure of the estates. He publicized his conditions for attracting and settling farming families in order to exploit the natural resources of his estate. He introduced new agricultural plants, pushed merino sheep farming and dog breeding, and preached the virtues of home textile manufacturing to his tenants and farmers. In addition, he established foundries, built and sold ships and boats for use on the northern lakes in the economically and militarily contested border region between the United States and Canada. Finally, Parish started mining iron ore deposits on his lands in order to turn them into military armaments. In doing so, the Hamburg-born investor followed a contemporary trend: The Industrial Revolution was beginning to have an impact

22 Sarah Lentz, „Eine viel wichtigere Persönlichkeit als der Präsident selbst“: David Parish und die Finanzierung der US-Regierung im Krieg von 1812, in: Rolf Hammel-Kiesow, Heiko Herold und Claudia Schnurmann (eds.), *Die hanseatisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen seit 1790* (= Hansische Studien, vol. 34), Trier 2017, pp. 35-64; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in both Hemispheres, or reminiscences of the Life of a former Merchant*, New York 1854; Adrian J. Pearce, *The Hope-Barings Contract: Finance and Trade between Europe and the Americas, 1805-1808*, in: *EHR* 124, 2009, pp. 1324-1352.

23 New York Historical Society (NYHS), *David Parish Letterbook*, fol. 276-277. List of correspondents in a letter from David Parish, New York, to his brothers in Hamburg, 1806.

on the economies of the older, long-settled states along North America's East Coast. In bringing the Industrial Revolution to rural Upstate New York, David Parish, supposedly "sovereign lord" over his villages Parishville, Rossie (named after the castle of his much-loved elder sister Henriette Ross), and Antwerp (named after the city of his first mercantile exploits), all situated in St. Lawrence County on the St. Lawrence River about 370 miles north of the economically-booming New York City, contributed to the economic takeoff of the United States.

David Parish also played an important role in securing the finances of the American federal government during the War of 1812. Parish's father's trade in arms and armaments from Hamburg to the rebellious colonies and the struggling young republic had contributed toward the survival of the rebellious confederated states. The contributions by his son, David Parish, to the finances of the Republic represented both a considerably higher risk in investment, and involved some 11 million U.S. dollars. This large sum partly consisted of David Parish's own money, capital contributions of American bankers like Stephen Girard (1750-1831), his father's old buddy, and merchants like the German tycoon Johann Jakob Astor (1763-1848) whom Parish had convinced of the soundness of the financial scheme, and—finally and ironically—financial contributions of English banks that supported the efforts of the Parish-Girard-Astor consortium to stabilize U.S.-American federal finances during the war with Great Britain. In a letter to his brother Richard in Hamburg, David Parish described the profitable deal with his typical cool elegance: He opened the letter by noting the activities of common friends before he rather casually mentioned that "I was lately induced into an extensive financial operation with the government".²⁴ His younger brother Charles, who had been informed via the family grapevine, responded to this information with equal noblesse and coolness: "I see you have entered into an extensive concern with Girard [...] your name was blazoned forth in the papers here, along with Girards & Astor, as the three opulent individuals who had taken the loan of 11 million dollars."²⁵

In 1816 David Parish returned to Europe for good, although at first he still harbored the notion that he would return to the U.S., where he had acquired U.S.-American citizenship on May 7, 1816. Like his father before him, David Parish became U.S. consul, however not in his hometown Hamburg, but in the Flemish entrepôt Antwerp, and he lost this position, just like his father, because he changed sides.

While David Parish left the U.S.A. and travelled Europe until he committed suicide in Vienna in 1826, his business activities were taken over by his brother George in

²⁴ NYHS David Parish Letterbook, David Parish, Philadelphia, to Richard Parish, Hamburg, May 8, 1813.

²⁵ St. Lawrence University Library, Special Collections & University Archives Parish-Rossee Papers (StLUL) Charles Parish, London, to David Parish, Philadelphia, June 8, 1813.

Ogdensburg/NY and Philadelphia, as well as many friends, colleagues, relatives, and neighbors from Hamburg.²⁶ The commercial interests of Hamburg trading companies and merchant-bankers like Berenberg, Gossler and Co., Heckscher & Co., Oppenheimer & Co., Heine, Hesse & Haller grew extremely strong during the 1820's and won a new momentum after the Convention of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation was signed between the United States and the Hanseatic Republics in 1827.²⁷ Hamburgers *avant la lettre* were everywhere in the U.S.A., long before any American fast food was invented, in fact an American adaptation of the Hamburg "rondstuck" as a Hamburg steak that made its first appearance in a U.S.-American cookery book from 1842. At the same time, scholars with strong kinship ties to Hamburg and personal interests in the Atlantic knowledge exchange tried hard to promote Hamburg's fame in the U.S.A. The timing was perfect: U.S.-American merchants already knew about Hamburg's advantages, but there was nothing wrong in further advertising them. Francis Lieber, a friend and in-law to Hamburg merchants, managed to do just that when he emphasized Hamburg's glory in his widely acclaimed *Encyclopaedia Americana*, that was published in Philadelphia circa 1829-1834: „The commerce of Hamburg was increased, particularly, by its direct intercourse with the United States of America. [...] Hamburg was one of the richest and most prosperous of the free cities.“²⁸

People from Hamburg and traveling via Hamburg to God's own country came not always as poor, desperate, unemployed and uneducated immigrants looking for a chance in their life, but as professional entrepreneurs and investors who wanted to make a strong impact on developing the countryside, mines, railroads, and agriculture of the U.S. Around 1829, Charles August Heckscher started as the New York representative of the Hamburg based trading house Heckscher & Co., where he lived in style in a spacious manor in Orange/NJ before he turned to become a lord of the manor himself and founded a village called Heckscherville in Pennsylvania and invested in infrastructure, coal mines, and steel production in the rural part of that state with financial aid of his uncles and brothers in Hamburg, Jacob Oppenheimer, and his friend Salomon Heine.²⁹

26 Schnurmann, *Brücken aus Papier*, passim.

27 Hammel-Kiesow, Herold, Schnurmann, *Die hanseatisch-amerikanischen Beziehungen*, passim; Walter Kresse, *Die Auswirkungen der Handelsverträge der Hansestädte mit amerikanischen Staaten auf die Hamburger Schifffahrt*, in: ZVHG 60, pp. 139-136.

28 Hamburg, in: *Encyclopaedia Americana: A Popular Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature, History, Politics, and Biography*, vol. VI, Philadelphia Carey and Lea, 1831, pp. 147-149, p.148.

29 Claudia Schnurmann, Charles August Heckscher: A model self-made Man and Merchant in the Atlantic World in the first half of the Nineteenth Century (1806-1866), in: *Immigrant Entrepreneurship, German-American Business Biographies 1720 to the present*, ed. by German Historical Institute in Washington/DC, URL: <https://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org> (10/08/2019).



From left to right:
David Scott Zeller,
President of The American Club of Hamburg e. V.,
Professor Dr. Claudia Schnurmann,
University of Hamburg, and
U.S. Consul General Richard Tsutomu Yoneoka

Despite several global financial crises (1789, 1819, 1826), Hamburg became a first rate entrepôt in U.S.-American trade with Europe during the 1770's through 1840's via private and diplomatic Hamburg-America lines that included smuggling and treaties, private investments, and Atlantic network building. Hamburg's share in the U.S. exports to Europe climbed from 2.1% in the 1770's to nearly 19% in 1795. Simultaneously, the cultural exchange increased through mutual interactions and students exchanges as well as intense letter writing and the exchange of libraries, books, and wine.³⁰

In those decades, Hamburg became a real gateway to the world, and the U.S.A. became an important part of the world for Hamburg citizens who relentlessly captured as much information they could access to improve their commercial skills. Given the close connection of commerce and culture in the Hanseatic perception of the world it hardly is a coincidence that in 1927 a professorship for overseas history with special regard to U.S.-American history was among the very first chairs to be established at the newly founded University of Hamburg. The establishment of the university by the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg in the aftermath of World War I, in a climate of civic optimism in the Weimar Democracy freed from aristocratic dominance, reflected the Hamburg citizens' traditional interest in civil education. People in those days, enlightened *Pfeffersäcke*, well to do merchants like Edmund Siemers (1840-1918) knew that knowledge is power and profit. Siemers, the so-called „Hamburg's Carnegie,“ created his very own Hamburg-America line when he participated in trade with the Americas (guano, salpeter) and took part in the creation of companies that were forerunners of the Deutsche Esso GmbH although

30 Hermann Wellenreuther, Die Amerikanische Revolution im Handel: Die Neugestaltung des atlantischen Wirtschaftsraums 1775–1796, in: *Annales Mercaturae* 3, 2017, pp. 139-162.

he was outrivalled by John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Company.³¹ He sponsored literal highflying projects like the “Hamburger Luftschiffhallen” in 1911 and highflying ideas of the young university that soon gave a professorship to historian Adolf Rein³² who — like Büsch und Ebeling in the 1760’s through 1780’s — put special emphasis on teaching U.S.-American history and politics to young Hamburg students who were expected to recreate the cities well-being during the reconstruction era of the Weimar Republic.

Thank you for your attention.

31 Claudia Sodermann-Fast, Siemers, Edmund, in: NDB 24, 2010, pp. 380-381,
URL: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd101782101.html#ndbcontent> (10/08/2019).

32 Gustav Adolf Rein (1885-1979) started his career in Hamburg in 1919 with high hopes; his second book, entitled: *Die Verfassung der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, Strassburg 1914, had raised expectations that he would strengthen the strong position of Hamburg-U.S.A. relations and lead to his employment as “Extraordinariat für Kolonial- und Überseeegeschichte” (Associate Professor for Colonial and Overseas History) at the recently founded University of Hamburg in 1927. In 1933, he joined the NSDAP and became director of the “Hamburger Hochschulbehörde” (Hamburg University Authority); he used his power not only on his own behalf by upgrading his position to a “Ordentliche Professur für Kolonial- und Überseeegeschichte und Geschichte des Deutschtums im Ausland” (Professor for Colonial and Overseas History and the History of Germanity in Foreign Countries), he also forced colleagues into exile, obeyed the antihuman politics of the German government and brought the university in line with governmental oppression. In 1945, he lost his position, was removed from the university and judged by the British courts as „Mitläufer“, a harmless follower.

